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Fairy Tales Come to Life at CDC

Naval Support Activity Bethesda Celebrates Month of the Military Child

By Andrew Damstedt
NSAB Public Affairs
staff writer

Children at Naval Support Activity Bethesda's (NSAB) Child Development Centers (CDCs) are getting the royal treatment this month, as the facilities where they are cared for are being transformed into fairy tale castles in celebration of Month of the Military Child.

Each classroom has been decorated into a fairy tale – one might catch a glimpse of Ariel, Snow White or Cinderella – or perhaps Prince Eric, Kristoff or the three little pigs when visiting the centers in April.

Three-year-olds in one classroom were eating a yogurt snack and shouting out their favorite characters from the movie "Frozen," while in another classroom, children were practicing a skit about "The Three Little Pigs." Each child is learning both the part of the Big Bad Wolf and the little pigs to perform for their parents April 30. After practicing the part of the Big Bad Wolf, 4-year-old Keegan Gosha-West said it wasn't nice for the wolf to blow down the pigs' houses.

"We decided to bring the fairy tale alive and also bring them to the children to live it," said Jamila Aziz, Naval Support Activity Bethesda Child & Youth Program Oversight director, explaining each year a different theme is chosen to celebrate Month of the Military Child. "I remember when I was a little girl growing up in Morocco – every Saturday night, my grandfather used to tell a story ... and all the kids would sit in front of him for hours and listen to the stories of fairy tales."



Photo by Andrew Damstedt

Amed Ham, Child & Youth Program assistant for the Child Development Centers (CDCs) on Naval Support Activity Bethesda, reads the story of "The Three Little Pigs" to preschool-age children, who are learning about that story in April to celebrate Month of the Military Child. The CDCs have been transformed into castles with each classroom being decorated to a certain fairy tale in an effort to make the stories come to life. The children are learning skits, songs and dances to perform for their parents April 30.

In another classroom, preschoolers were learning about "The Little Mermaid." 4-year-old Emma Silvestre said a lot of the girls want to be Ariel in a skit they plan to perform for their parents.

"We're trying to make the classroom about mermaids," Emma said, excited they were going to make mermaid skirts.

Her classmate, 4-year-old Deon Coleman Jr., said he liked fairy tales because they have some of his favorite characters and "because there are a lot of problems in fairy tales and

then someone defends her [the princess]."

One of his favorite characters from "The Little Mermaid" is Flounder.

"He helps Ariel," Deon said.

In 1986, the Department of Defense (DOD) designated April as Month of the Military Child to recognize the personal sacrifices and contributions of military children.

"The child and the family sacrifice a lot when the parent is deployed or when they're serving their mission," Aziz said. "So, I think, in acknowl-

edgement, we show our appreciation for the child who goes through all that."

There are approximately 1.88 million military children of active duty and reserve service members, and it's estimated that a military child will move six to nine times during a school career, according to DOD information.

On a wall at CDC 2, parents have been invited to put up a picture of them with their child on a star underneath the words "Wish Upon A Star." This week, parents have been invited to

read/tell a story of their favorite childhood fairy tale.

Other activities for parents and children include making crowns (April 20-24), participating in a photo booth (April 21-24), and attending a Prince and Princess Ball in Bldg. 26 (April 27-29). The celebration concludes with "Fairy Tales Come Alive" skits, songs and dances (April 30).

The CDCs are open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, except federal holidays, and provide care for children 6 weeks to five years old.

Commander's Column

Keeping NSA Bethesda Safe and Secure – An All Hands Responsibility

This week, I'd like to ask you to take just a few moments to thoughtfully consider the security environment at Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB). Hopefully, this is not a thought that you have often, as it is the Security Department's primary duty to ensure that everyone who lives on, works in, or visits the installation is able to do so without undue concern for their, or their family members' physical security and personal safety.



Members of the NSAB Security Staff, including our Auxiliary Security Force personnel, work diligently and tirelessly to ensure a safe and secure environment, but they can't do it alone. Sentries, gates, the fence line, and barriers are the obvious physical element of NSAB's security, but they comprise only one dimension of the effort. To be truly effective, a security program needs to be multi-dimensional. It is critical that tenant staff maintain awareness and compliance with installation regulations and policies, just as they do in their local communities. Cooperation with Security personnel at the Entry Control Points (ECP) and Visitor Control Center (VCC) is critical to the success of those whose role is to protect those they serve.

So how is this accomplished? The Security Staff, including the active duty Master at Arms, are professional law enforcement personnel, and should be treated with the same dignity and respect as any other law enforcement officer outside the fence line. By following the directions of Security personnel at the installation gates and during emergency situations is an excellent first step. The ECP Sentry does not set the installation access policies and procedure, but they are there to enforce them. By not challenging them or becoming upset; having proper ID or documentation, as required when entering the installation, and following proper installation policies and procedures for guest or visitor access are vital and important. By driving responsibly on the installation, observing posted speed limits, cross walks, and stop signs, wearing seat belts, and refraining from talking on cell phones while driving increases the safety posture for everyone.

Please put yourself in the shoes of an NSAB Security member for just a moment. They are simultane-

ously charged with defending everyone on the installation, while at the same time the subject of intense scrutiny by those they serve, as they should be. They shoulder an awesome and immense responsibility, and part of that means that they must occasionally be inflexible with others. We hold them to an extremely high standard. We must. They interact with thousands of people every day. The great majority of the times, those interactions are smooth and event-free. But if a convicted felon or someone with malevolent intentions

comes to the gate, we expect and depend upon our Security team to be able to detect, detain, and/or repel them. Every time they have to deal with someone who perhaps forgot their ID card at home and decides to get irritable with a member of Security, it distracts the Security team member from their real job focus, of detecting and deterring 'bad guys' from entering the installation and doing the rest of us harm. So please, help them do their job by upholding your responsibility and following policy, having your ID out and ready to hand to the Sentry, and being polite and cooperative with the Sentry. They will be polite and cooperative with you. Those are my instructions to and expectations of them

However peaceful and relatively uneventful daily life on NSA Bethesda may seem, there are constant threats that exist and the security posture must remain vigilant. We all must remain aware and work together to counter. By "we," I mean everyone – active duty, civilians, family members, contractors, and even visitors. It is our perennial goal and dedicated mission to ensure that everyone who transits to, from, or on NSA Bethesda enjoys a safe, peaceful, and threat-free environment. Working together for the good of everyone may mean accepting minor inconveniences, but they are worth this small cost if it means that we all, service members, patients, family members, employees, and guests, can do so safely while aboard NSA Bethesda.

**All Ahead Flank,
David A. Bitonti, Capt., DC, USN
Commanding Officer
Naval Support Activity Bethesda**

Bethesda Notebook

Base Clean Up for Earth Week

The 45th Earth Week is April 20-24, and there will be a base clean up on Naval Support Activity Bethesda on April 22 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. with participants meeting in front of Building 62. To sign up, email Mark Liao at mark.liao@navy.mil or Brian Hillis at brian.hillis@navy.mil. For more information, call NSAB Environmental Programs Division at 301-295-2708 or email Latonya.nimmons@navy.mil.

Take Your Daughters, Sons to Work Day

The 4th Annual Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day is April 23 at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Interested participants can register their children with Susan Kline, registration coordinator at susan.l.kline.civ@mail.mil. Registration is limited to 150 children and will be open until April 20. Children will be exposed to the many facets of WRNMMC during the day, and "open their eyes to the numerous opportunities within the nation's most prestigious military medical center," according to organizers. For more information, email Col. Margret Merino, chief of pediatrics, at Margret.e.merino.mil@mail.mil.

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Project SERVE Launches Second Year at WRNMMC

By Sharon Renee Taylor
WRNMMC Public Affairs
staff writer

Twenty-four nursing students from Auburn University (AU) and Auburn University at Montgomery (AUM) traveled to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) for instruction to support long-term care of returning veterans in the Project SERVE program. A kick-off ceremony March 23 at the medical center, "Where Our Nation Heals Its Heroes," marked the second year for the project.

"This has been an extraordinary partnership between Auburn University and [WRNMMC]," explained Army Col. Joy Napper, deputy director for nursing at WRNMMC. "It expands the field of the care of the wounded warrior from the military treatment facility to the civilian sector, and links that tie-in to advance the continuum of care."

WRNMMC Director Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Jeffrey Clark called Project SERVE a groundbreaking collaboration between WRNMMC and the two universities when the project launched last year. Clark said the schools and WRNMMC were the first educational institutions in 2014 to support First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden's Joining Forces campaign, which charged organizations to pre-



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Christopher Krucke

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center nursing and education leaders join nursing professors and students from Auburn University and Auburn University Montgomery to kick-off Project SERVE, a collaborative program with WRNMMC to teach the students long-term care for returning veterans. This is the second year WRNMMC has facilitated the nursing training program.

pare the nation's nurses to meet the unique needs of service members and their families.

"For us in particular, in Alabama, we have many reservists and guardsmen [who] serve, but we have no military hospital in our state, so it's very important for our nurses to understand how to best care for [veterans] once they leave the military facilities and come to us in the communities," explained Ramona Lazenbee, Ed.D., a family nurse practitioner and interim dean of the School of Nursing, AUM.

Retired Navy nurse Virginia Raderstorf, chief of global communications at WRNMMC who

helped coordinate the kick-off ceremony, likened the positive impact of WRNMMC partnering with civilian nursing programs to a pebble in the water. She explained there are real long-term benefits to the extended warrior population in exporting what WRNMMC has learned to other regions of the country.

"Many of these regions have large numbers of returning warriors but their health care system may have limited VA [Veterans Affairs] facilities or trained professionals available with the background and specialization necessary to recognize a potential TBI [traumatic brain injury] or PTSD [post traumatic stress

disorder] overlay in a patient who presents to the ER [emergency room] or is coming in for surgery, experiencing marital discord or financial consequences," Raderstorf said. "By exposing these students and their faculty, they are able to take that knowledge back and export it to their colleagues in different clinical settings."

The students spent four days assisting military and civilian nurses who work with wounded patients with TBI, PTSD, mental health concerns, as well as those who need polytrauma/amputee rehabilitation. They also attended panels that discussed the special needs of these patients' families. The nursing students rotated in groups of six throughout several areas of the medical center, including surgical units.

The mix of third, fourth and fifth semester students all volunteered to participate in Project SERVE during their spring breaks. The information exchange at WRNMMC was the first learning opportunity of its kind outside of Auburn University for nursing students junior Caroline Quick, as well as seniors Brooke Rocholl and Kaitlin Perry.

Quick explained why the opportunity was so important for nursing students. "I think it's going to cross over into our professions," the Auburn junior said. "We're going to see return-

ing vets and we're going to see them in [civilian] hospitals, and I think this is the only way for me to really grasp how to bring my nursing career with it."

"I just think this is a really great opportunity," Rocholl added. "We're having people coming back from war with all of these injuries that we've never seen before—poly-amputations and traumatic brain injury—people are surviving injuries they never would have in the past, so it's important that we can learn how to best take care of these types of traumas."

"The people are amazing here," Perry added.

WRNMMC Director of Nursing Army Col. Ray C. Antoine encouraged the nursing students from AU and AUM to "learn all you can to best serve our patients." He thanked them for joining WRNMMC nurses. "We equally learn from you," Antoine said.

Joel McElroy, a third semester senior nursing student at AUM, applied to participate in Project SERVE to learn how to care for wounded warriors, amputees, and patients with PTSD. He explained this assignment had special significance for him. His grandfather served in the Navy, and his uncle was a colonel in the National Guard.

"My uncle had some physical

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NSAB Recognizes Public Safety Telecommunicators

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class
Hank Gettys
NSAB Public Affairs
staff writer

This week, Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) is recognizing the hard work and dedication of an often underappreciated group of people by celebrating National Public Safety Telecommunications Week April 12-19.

Public safety telecommunicators, more commonly known as dispatchers, often don't get the recognition they deserve. They work tirelessly to help police officers and fire departments as they quickly respond to calls for assistance.

"The importance of this week is that it's the people you never see, and you never hear, but they are always there taking care of things," said Carl Savard, NSAB Emergency Services Dispatch Supervisor. "They're the ones

that send you help when you need it.

"They have a stressful job, and because they are always in their communication center and in front of their monitors and radios, you barely see them."

Each year, the second full week of April is dedicated to the men and women who serve as public safety telecommunicators. In the early 1990s, the national Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) convinced Congress of the need for a formal proclamation to create "National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week." NSAB Emergency Services Dispatchers handle both emergency and non-emergency phone calls, as well as radio dispatch for the Police, Fire and EMS units. The dispatchers are trained in Police and Fire Service Telecommunication, Emergency Medical Dispatching, Active Shooter, Incident Command training, and CPR, among others..

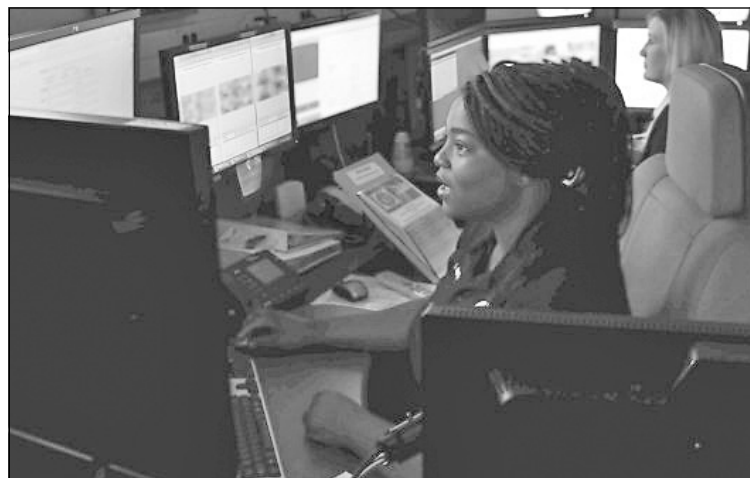


Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Hank Gettys

Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) Emergency Services Dispatchers Ife Smith (left) and Sarah Legatte (right) work in their communications center April 14.

The job of a dispatcher is one of the most stressful jobs in the public safety industry as they are truly the first line of help for our citizens in need, according to Savard. They work 12 hour shifts, nights, weekends, holi-

days, and even in bad weather to help keep their communities safe.

"As busy as it gets, I enjoy when we have emergencies going on and it's active and we're doing stuff and the police or the

fire [department] are talking to us, and we are talking back," said Ife Smith, an NSAB emergency services dispatcher. "When we are really engaged is when I enjoy my job the most."

Before a Law Enforcement Officer, Fireman, or any emergency personnel ever start to respond to a scene, a dispatcher has already spoken with the victim and evaluated the situation to determine what resources are needed to best handle the incident.

"Because a lot of people don't know that we actually exist, they all think that we are a part of security or a part of the fire department, and not our own entity," said Sarah Leggate, an NSAB emergency services dispatcher. "So it would be nice for people to know that we are our own separate department."

Dispatchers have mastered the art of multi-tasking, prob-

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Tricare Online, Secure Messaging Enhance Patient Experience

By Sharon Renee Taylor
WRNMMC Public Affairs writer



Photo by Sharon Renee Taylor

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Alejandra McKeever maneuvers around the Tricare Online (TOL) page. Patients can use the web-based TOL to request appointments and medication renewals, as well as perform other helpful tasks.

Two Internet tools are providing patients the opportunities to participate in their own care, helping Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) meet its one priority of providing an extraordinary patient experience for every patient, every time.

Tricare Online (TOL) and Secure Messaging (SM), also known as RelayHealth, provide WRNMMC patients a portal to personal health care information. The two aid in communication between patients and their health-care providers, as well as deliver secure information in a safe and convenient way.

Additionally, TOL allows patients to manage certain aspects of their health care without having to coordinate or rely on anyone else. TOL users

can access the system's "Blue Button" feature to schedule appointments, request prescription refills and access personal health data such as lab and radiology results, immunizations, medication profile, allergies, as well as vital signs data.

SM is a web-based service directly linking patients to their Medical Home Teams. The secure, efficient electronic communication service is a Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)-compliant communication system that can be accessed anywhere, anytime. Patients can request appointments, referrals, medication renewals, lab and test results, consult with their health care team, or schedule a virtual web "visit," saving a trip for an appointment.

Retired Army Col. (Dr.) Thomas Fitzpatrick, chief of quality at WRNMMC, said the best way for patients to stay informed about their health care is to use both TOL and SM.

Aaron Heinrichs, chief of Managed Care, explained once beneficiaries are enrolled in TOL, "They all seem to use it."

Maria O'Dowd, a WRNMMC registered nurse, agreed. She has worked with patients who have used Secure Messaging for the last three years. "It's amazing because [patients] call or send a message, eager to learn the system and communicate with their provider using [SM]."

O'Dowd said she has patients in their 90s using SM. "It's just incredible the way they use Secure Messaging — they're more computer savvy than me!"

She said SM helps to decrease clinic walk-ins, since it often eliminates their need to come into the clinic, and having to

wait in line. Lewis Cooper, an administrative assistant for Team Delta Primary Care Medical Home at WRNMMC has worked with Secure Messaging for the last four years.

"I love [SM]. It's easier to book patients. It's more hands on. We can cater to their needs and they don't have to sit around waiting," Cooper explained. He said the system lends itself to a one-on-one relationship with the patient — that is "really patient-centered."

During Patient Safety Week in March, the hospital campaigned to increase the number of patients registered. Fitzpatrick explained how TOL and SM fit in with patient safety and quality.

"The big tie with both of these is that they involve the patient in their care," Fitzpatrick said. "If patients have problems obtaining information and accessing doctors, secure messaging gives the patient the ability to actu-

ally contact the doctor and get information. It can be as simple as getting refills for prescriptions, making appointments, or asking questions — that's the big thing with secure messaging."

Fitzpatrick explained with TOL, patients have the ability to see their results. "They can access lab results [and] access their imaging results so that they're not left out in the cold, not knowing what's going on. These are two big aspects from a quality standpoint," he said.

According to Fitzpatrick, SM and TOL also fit in with the medical center's new strategic plan rolled out by WRNMMC Director Army Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Jeffrey B. Clark, earlier this month. "The patient experience is at the center of everything we do, so we need to unite around that and make sure that everybody is offered the highest levels of [qual-

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Sailors, Soldiers Graduate LPN Course

By Sharon Renee Taylor
WRNMMC Public Affairs staff writer

Thirty enlisted Sailors and Soldiers graduated from the Army Practical Nurse Course as 68C Class 14-004 at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC), March 27.

The 26 Soldiers and four Sailors comprised the first joint service class for the course, and they are now able to function as competent practical nurses, during peacetime and mobilization.

The group completed the requirements of a year-long course that began March 3, 2014, at the Academy of Health Sciences, U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. They continued with rigorous clinical training at both Fort Belvoir Community Hospital and WRNMMC, where they had to pass a national licensure examination before graduating.



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Christopher Krucke

For the first time, Sailors and Soldiers straight from Basic Training graduated from the Army Practical Nurse Course, last month at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

Students in the newly-revised class, considered a pilot program, included Soldiers straight from basic training as well as Sailors — a first for the LPN course. WRNMMC boasts a 97 percent first-time pass rate for the National Council Licensure Examination Practical Nurse (NCLEX-PN), 12 percent better than the national average.

"This is a good place to learn and grow,"

WRNMMC Director Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Jeffrey B. Clark told students during a welcoming ceremony at WRNMMC on June 5, 2014. At the group's graduation ceremony in March, he told them, "This is the first anywhere, at any time."

The general called the graduation a historical moment for Navy medicine, Army medicine

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TRICARE

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ity and] safety with their medical care,” Fitzpatrick said.

Seaman James P. McCracken signed up for TRICARE Online four months ago to find the closest military treatment facility where he could register for a primary care manager (PCM). Soon after, the Sailor signed up for SM to communicate with his doctors.

“[I like] not having to schedule an appointment to see my PCM over small

issues,” McCracken said. “I think it’s a great system that helps patients better communicate with their doctors regarding their plan of care, [as well as] major or minor health concerns.”

Patients interested in using SM should contact their primary care or specialty care clinic, or sign up at www.relayhealth.com. TRICARE patients need one of three credentials to access TOL: a Premium DOD Self-Service Logon (DS Logon), a DOD Common Access Card (CAC), or identification for the Defense Finance and Accounting Service’s (DFAS) myPay website. For TRICARE sign up, go to www.tricareonline.com or call 1-800-600-9332.

SAFETY

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lem-solving and listening to frantic calls in different languages, all while attempting to remain calm and composed. A dispatcher must show compassion, understanding and professionalism throughout each and every shift, according to Savard.

“I want people to understand how busy it gets in here and how hard we work to meet your needs when we have 15 other

things going on at the same time, whether it’s phone calls from people around the base or fire or police,” said Leggate.

There is always one voice working to make sense of the chaos, a voice that patiently works through almost any situation to bring about the best available outcome. These men and women serve as the foundation in a complicated telecommunications system that 24 hours a day responds when the call is given.

“Having this week to recognize us is great and I hope the recognition gives people a different perspective on who we are and how we operate,” said Smith.

SERVE

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trauma from an [improvised explosive device] in Afghanistan two years ago, so it kind of hit home,” McElroy, who attends AUM, explained.

“One of the ‘charges’ of the program is to establish ‘core competencies’ for all nurses — military and civilian,” said retired Air Force Col. Marilyn K. Rhodes,

Ed.D., a registered nurse and associate professor at AUM, one of three Auburn University educators who developed the idea of Project SERVE after they identified the need for educating new nurses on how to manage care for returning service members.

In the second year of the program, the students took this theoretical knowledge and put it into practice during their time at WRNMMC, according to retired Navy Nurse Corps Cmdr. David Crumbley, associate professor at AUM School of Nursing.



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LPN

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and the Military Health System. "We are beyond 'joint-ness' but oneness," he said, quoting WRNMMC Command Master Chief Tyrone Willis, who was joined by nursing and enlisted leaders from the Defense Health Agency, Fort Sam Houston and WRNMMC at the ceremony. Navy Bureau of Medicine Force Master Chief Sherman Boss served as keynote speaker.

"You don't get this [every day] — how they really came together," said Army Lt. Col. Christine Ludwig, director of the Practical Nurse Course.

Ludwig attributed the Soldiers' and Sailors' cohesiveness to the the uniqueness of having corpsmen and Soldiers learning together with different service cultures and different personalities, "as well as really unique Soldiers, straight from basic training; this is their first time."

"They didn't know it all," Ludwig said. "They didn't come in with a way of doing things. They learned from others; they let others show them how to do it."

More than 150 well-wishers, most family members of the graduates, gathered in the Memorial Auditorium for the graduation. Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Paola Baldizon, one of the graduates, said family played an important role in

their success. Successfully completing 20 grueling exams, 11 weeks of study and hundreds of hours in training during the comprehensive, fast-paced course — all while balancing family-life — was a challenge, Baldizon explained.

"Every student rose to the occasion due to the support of their families and staff," the Soldier said.

Army Spc. Jason Mortham, one of six course graduates to make the dean's list, agreed with his classmate. "I have a wife, a son, and a baby on the way," he said. "They were very supportive. It took a lot of sacrifice on both ends but we made it work."

The new LPN serving at WRNMMC was a medic at Fort Bragg, N.C. before he began the course. Staying here as an LPN and with four years in the Army, Mortham hopes to earn a commission and join the Army Nurse Corps.

Navy Hospitalman (HN) Nicole Parent, Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class (HM3) Jason Castillo and HM3 Michael Talmadge were three of the four Sailors who also graduated March 27. They each indicated one of the best parts of the course was working with Soldiers, learning and teaching Army and Navy culture.

"So what usually takes two years to complete on the civilian side, we did in 13 months. Yes, it was a challenge — a challenge we overcame, together," Baldizon said. "I think we were all particularly lucky to be in this class. We came in as 30 different strangers, and we've become a wonderful family."

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